

WASHINGTON TIDES

# Challenge to Mr. Eisenhower

CPYRGHT

by Ernest K. Lindley

EVIDENCE mounts that we are witnessing a major change in Soviet tactics. We can only conjecture to what extent the change is due to internal stress, whether within the Communist empire, the Soviet Union, or at the heart of the Presidium. We can only conjecture as to how far it may go and how long it may endure. There are many indications already, however, that the Kremlin not only wants an armistice in Korea but wishes to explore the possibility of negotiating settlements of some other East-West questions.

How well prepared are we for negotiations? It is axiomatic that successful negotiation requires not only skill and a steady appraisal of ultimate objectives—both one's own and one's opponents'—but strength.

We have a President with global outlook and prestige and a deep awareness of the gravity of the threat to the free world. We have a Secretary of State with experience in negotiation that is unmatched in his party. He, too, has a steady view of ultimate objectives. It is pertinent to note also that in the immediate aftermath of Stalin's death the Secretary was in a minority among the top policy advisers to the President. Others misread the attacks on American and British planes as indications that the new regime wanted an increase in tension. Secretary Dulles advised against a proclamation or speech by the President intended to put the Kremlin "on the spot." He urged, instead, caution, watchful waiting, and a conciliatory tone designed to abet, rather than discourage, the elements in the Kremlin which seemed to be moving toward negotiation. The President took his advice and at least some who at first urged a contrary tactic now acknowledge that the Secretary of State was right in his diagnosis and his counsel.

We have in key positions other men with a steady view and long experience: Allen Dulles, W. Bedell Smith, Gen. Omar N. Bradley and the Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Alfred M. Gruenther, Charles E. Bohlen, and

Lewis L. Strauss, to mention only a few. They are not likely to be hoodwinked.

The governments of our principal allies and many of the smaller ones are in the hands of men who have shown more awareness than their political adversaries of the nature of the Communist-Soviet threat.



All these are important assets. But it would be blind to deny that we have serious potential weaknesses. Moscow could hardly have chosen, for its own purposes, a better moment to switch to tactics designed to intensify the internal stresses of the Western world.

The Soviet peace offensive already has heartened the movement to cut our defenses and the aid necessary to strengthen our allies. An armistice in Korea undoubtedly would give it further impetus. Yet an armistice there would settle nothing. It could be no more than a prelude to serious, difficult, and probably protracted negotiations. Not to support our diplomacy during this period with a maximum of strength would be to handicap it seriously, perhaps fatally.

The situation now developing requires powerful and determined leadership by the President. No one else can muster the support necessary to maintain our strength. In Congress, this support manifestly must be bipartisan. The narrow Republican majorities contain men who, not having recognized the threat from abroad as real when it was provocatively beligerent, cannot be expected to recognize it now.

Behind a bipartisan majority in Congress, the President must muster the public opinion to withstand the sort of stampede back to normalcy which followed the second world war and the lifting of the Berlin blockade in 1949.

THIRDLY, he should exert his power to protect his key men from continual harassment and back-stabbing. In this fateful period, the Secretary of State should not have to negotiate with McCarthy in addition to the Russians and our allies.